135

That the Trade *to* Affrica, *is only Manageable by an* Incorporated Company *and a* Joynt Stock, *Demonstrated in a* Letter *to a* Member *of the Present* Houſe *of* Commons, *by a* Gentleman *in the* CITY.

76

SIR,

BEing no leſs your Servant upon the account of your Merit and Quality, than of the many Acts of Friendſhip that you have at all ſeaſons exerciſed towards me; you have an indiſputable Right of Commanding my Service, and I own my ſelf obliged to yield you an entire Obedience in all that you are pleaſed to exact, which lieth within the Circle of my Power to perform.

Now, I need not tell you, that the *African Company* as Eſtabliſhed, did, neither mould themſelves into a Society, upon a previous Combination of a few Wealthy and Covetous Gentlemen; nor did they enter into the preſent Method of managing that Commerce, by wreſting it out of the hands of others, that had promoted and improv'd it to the Honour of the Government, and to a National advantage; but they Embarq'd in it upon the Invitation and Encouragement of King *Charles* II. and His *Privy Council*, as well as upon the Perſwaſion of many other Perſons of Quality and Senſe; and this they did at a Juncture and Seaſon, when it was fallen under ſuch a Decay, that it was apprehended by all people of Thought and Proſpect, to be in danger of being totally loſt.

And as it could not then eſcape your *Obſervation*, no more can it now your *Memory*, that the *Trade* of *Africa* was about twenty years ago, not only ſo abated, but ſunk to ſuch a degree, that it became a matter of *State*, challenging the utmoſt Wiſdom and Care of his then Majeſty, and of thoſe of the profoundeſt prudence, and of the largeſt Mind, for the publick good, who were at that time in the Miniſtry, how to Revive and Reſtore it, ſo as to render it conſiſtent with the Honour of the Government, uſeful to the *American* Plantations, and of ampler advantage to the Nation, both in the *Export* of our *Manufacture*, and in the ſupplying us with larger quantities of the *Produce* which *That* Countrey yields, and *Ours* doth require.

Nor is it unworthy of remark, that the Credit and Reputation of the Trade to *Affrica* was then ſo low, that tho' encourag'd by the Kings Invitation to all His Subjects, to joyn in the recovery of it; and tho' further'd by the Subſcriptions of many Wealthy, Prudent, and Great Men, who upon a National, rather than Perſonal Motives, purſu'd the reſtoring the Kingdom to a gainful ſhare in it; yet the *Book* laid open for receiving *Subſcriptions* proportionate to ſuch an Undertaking, continu'd ſo above *Nine Months*, ere a Stock could be obtain'd adequate to ſo large a *Coaſt*, where not only ſo many difficulties were to be encountered and conflicted with, but where ſo great and expenſive Forts and Defences were to be Erected for the ſecuring the Traffick there, and the preſerving thoſe Factors, Officers, and Servants that ſhould be employed in it.

And as the whole Stock, after ſo much time waſted in attendance upon *Subſcribers*, amounted at laſt but to *One Hundred* and *Eleven Thouſand Pounds*; ſo thoſe who have from that time hitherto been entruſted with the Conduct thereof, have not only preſerved it entire for the ſupport of that Trade, but notwithſtanding the vaſt Diſburſments they have been at in Purchaſing and Erecting Caſtles, and Forts for the ſecurity of it, they have made ſuch improvements both in the encreaſe of the *Stock*, and the enlargement of the *Traffick*, as thoſe parts are capable of admitting.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

But as all publick Undertakings, tho' firſt attempted at the expence of a few, are upon the being improved to *Perſonal* and National Advantage, liable to be invaded by ſelfiſh and avaritious perſons, who after they have declined the hazzard and expence needful either to give birth unto, or to bring ſuch deſigns to perfection, are covetous to participate in the gain of them; ſo it hath been the misfortune of the preſent *African* Company, to have their Trade broken in upon, and the advantages ariſing by a Traffick which they had recovered to the Nation, and rendred ſafe to the Dealer, Raviſhed from them by *Interlopers*, who while they purſue nothing but their private Intereſt, do cover themſelves with the Mantle of pretended Zeal for publick Liberties and Rights.

Now Sir, the whole *Stock*, that was either Originally, advanced, or which upon an improvement hath been reſerved out of the *Dividends*, for the carrying on and encreaſing of the *African* Trade, being entruſted and lodged in the hands of a certain number of *Managers*, you cannot therefore but commend the Integrity of the preſent *Governing Members* of the *African* Society, and their Fidelity to the Truſt repoſed in them, if they do not tamely abandon either their own Cauſe and Intereſt, or the Cauſe and Intereſt of thoſe for whom they are *Truſtees*, and of whoſe Eſtates they are Guardians; but if by all thoſe ways that are Juſt and Legal, they endeavour to defend and vindicate their own and the Companies Right, to a quiet and undiſturbed Poſſeſſion of the *African* Trade.

And whereas through the *Companies* having no other Authority for precluding others from that Trade, but what they derive from *Charters* granted unto them by our late Kings, ſeveral have

taken the confidence, not only to diſpute the *Power* of our Kings in the granting *Charters* of this Nature; but have in defiance of thoſe *Charters*, challenged a Liberty of Trade into thoſe parts of *Africa*, which are reſerved unto the *Company* by them; you cannot avoid praiſing the Temper, Modeſty, and Prudence of the *African* Society, who from a ſenſibleneſs of their own incompetency to Judge of the Validity of *Charters* granted by Sovereign Princes, and for the preventing Quarrels with their fellow Subjects, and the obviating expenſive Suits in Courts of Law, did the laſt Seſſion apply in way of Petition to the Legiſlative Power, for obtaining a Law in Confirmation of what they have hitherto only enjoyed by *Charter*.

Which as it hath given occaſion, to thoſe no leſs peeviſh than clamorous Papers againſt the *Company*, that led you to require my thoughts on this Subject; ſo I doubt not, but both to diſcover unto you the frivolouſneſs and impertinency of all thoſe Allegations, upon which a certain ſort of angry Men are endeavouring to alter the preſent Method of the *African* Trade; and withal, to demonſtrate unto you, that the taking it off this *Foot* and *Baſis*, will prove the ſubverſion and ruin of it.

And ſeeing the benefit of the whole *Community*, and not the profit of a few, as the Complainants themſelves do acknowledge, is the Standard whereby we are to Judge, both of the neceſſity and of the National benefit of all particular Commerce and Traffick, and of the ſeveral Regulations under which they are to be managed; I do thereupon affirm, that the *Trade* to *Affrica*, can neither with Honour to the Government, Profit to the Kingdom, nor with ſafety to the Merchant, be carried on and upheld in any other Method, ſave that of an *Incorporated Company*, and of a *Joynt Stock*.

Nor can any thing adminiſter greater Evidence that I am not miſtaken, than that all the *European* Nations, who are Competitors with the *Company* in that Trade, do in this way both ſupport their Traffick thither, and enlarge it there. For tho' it might be poſſible, that ſome Nations, either upon worſe motives, or by meer caſualty and chance, might fall into this way of Traffick thither; yet it is impoſſible that all ſhould concur and centure in one and the ſame method, but upon an evident impracticableneſs of managing it with ſafety and advantage in any other manner.

And as there is no managing of that Trade, but under the protection of *Forts* and *Caſtles*; ſo they could never have been erected, nor can they be maintained, but by an *Incorporated Company* acting upon a *Joynt Stock*. 'Tis only under the protection of *Caſtles*, *Forts*, and an *Armed Strength*, that the *Companies* Factors, Servants and Goods, can be ſafe from the Treachery and Rapine of the *Natives*, and from the Violence and Depredation of their *European Rivals*. Were it not by reaſon of thoſe places of Shelter and Defence, none of thoſe whom the *Company* is forced to employ for tranſacting their buſineſs, would ever be perſwaded, or able to live amongſt ſo perfidious a people as the *Negroes* are known to be. Nor could any thing leſs, than the ſecurity enjoy'd by *Forts* and *Caſtles*, encourage the Merchant to venture his Eſtate into a Country, where his Effects muſt otherwiſe lie expoſed both to Hoſtility and Treachery,

And as the *African Trade* cannot be ſupported to any advantage, without large quantities of Goods upon the place, waiting for, and attending a Market; ſo nothing but *Forts* and *Caſtles* can prove ſecure Warehouſes for the preſervation of thoſe Goods in the *interim*. Nor are they only the ſafe Receptacles, both of the Commodities exported thither, till they can be vended, and of thoſe purchaſed there, till they can be tranſmitted hither; but they are alſo the only *Stores* for Food and Phyſick, without which, neither Factors, Souldiers, nor Sailers could be ſupply'd with the neceſſaries, much leſs accommodated with the comforts and conveniencies of life.

Nor can any Body of Men, but an *Incorporated Society* acting by, and upon a *Joynt Stock*, gain and maintain ſuch an *Intelligence*, as may upon ſo vaſt and extended a Coaſt, either give life unto, or procure an advantage by *Trade*. As perſons trading thither unprovided of ſetled Factors and Factories, can neither have an extended nor a certain and conſtant *Intelligence*; ſo without ſuch an *Intelligence*, there is no knowing what may be vended of our *Manufacture* in the ſeveral parts of *Affrica*, nor what may be obtained of their *Produce*. For as all Commerce there, is managed by way of *Barter*; ſo every place doth neither take off the like quantity of our Commodities, nor afford the like proportion of their own. Nay, it often happeneth, that through an eruption of War among the *Natives*; thoſe places which adminiſter a large and gainful Trade one year; yield either none, or that which is, both very little in it ſelf, and as little beneficial to us in another.

Moreover, it is only by means of an *Incorporated Company*, that the *Engliſh* in their Dealing and Trafficking with the *Natives*, can be reſtrained to a due Obſervation of the Rules and Meaſures of Humanity, Truth and Juſtice. For as Traders at random, do ſeldom propoſe any thing, beſides and beyond their private ends, ſo it is eaſie to be imagined, on what Inſolences, Frauds and Rapines, ſcattered and particular Men will venture, upon the hope and proſpect of enriching themſelves, when there is no Common and Eſtabliſhed *Society* accountable for the miſcarriage of every individual. And eſpecially ſeeing it is indifferent to them, whether the Trade be loſt for ever afterwards to the Nation; *Provided* that they have by Treachery and Violence, compaſs'd before hand the Wealth that they aimed at. Nor is it probable, that they who come ſeldom, and may be but once into thoſe parts, and who have none reſiding upon the place to be reſponſible for their behaviour, ſhould comport themſelves with that temper Moderation, and Juſtice, that the Servants of, and the Agents for the *Company* are obliged to do, and that, not only becauſe their Factors who remain upon the place, are liable to the Revenge and Recentment of the *Natives*, for every misbehaviour towards them; but becauſe the Offenders themſelves are accountable upon their return hither, in caſe they be complained of by the *Companies* Correſpondents and Agents from thence

136

Nor can any Society but that which is Eſtabliſhed upon, and which acteth in the way of a *Joynt Stock*, either enlarge the *African* Trade further, or preſerve it in that extent to which it is already brought, and whereby it is become ſo profitable to the Nation. For as there are no Kings of thoſe extended Territories, and of that uncontrouled Soveraignty, upon the *African* Coaſt, who upon the having Reſidents from hence with them, can allow and ſecure unto the Merchant any large and ſafe Trade; ſo there are no Cities or great Towns where through the ſetling *Conſuls* and Factors, we may as is practic'd in other parts of the World, drive a ſafe Commerce for the Sale of our own Commodities, and for the Purchaſe of theirs. But the Chief Trade of *Africa*, is either managed at the Companies Caſtles and Forts where the Neighbouring Natives buy what they want and ſell what they can ſpare, or elſe it is maintained by the ſending ſmall Veſſels to the remoter Parts and Rivers, where by *Barter* our own Goods are put off, and theirs fetcht away. Both which ways of Traffick as they are only practicable by a Company managing a Trade upon an United and Joynt-Stock; So they are inconſiſtent with, and repugnant unto the granting every one that will a right to Trade.

Further, As there is no carrying on the *African Trade*, to ſuch an advantage, as may both encourage the Merchant, and reward his Coſt, Hazard and Induſtry; but by having large Quantities as well as various ſorts of Commodities lodged in the Country to attend both the Seaſon, and the Changeableneſs of Trade; ſo nothing can be more evident, than that as this is not practicable, without Caſtles and Forts where Goods may be ſecured, no more is it to be effected to the degree which it ought, by what is Tranſported by *Single Adventurers* and in *Private Cargoes*.

Again as there is no preſerving the Trade of *Africa* without the being able and provided, to aſſiſt thoſe Princes, in whoſe Territories our Traffick lies, with Money, Arms, and Ammunition, to impower them againſt thoſe with whom they are in War; ſo this being an undertaking which no Single and Private Perſon, either will or can pretend unto, it may therefore lay every thinking Man under a Conviction, of the Neceſſity of an *Incorporated Company* and a *Joynt Stock*, for anſwering the Exigencies, which the preſerving the *African* Trade, the gaining and keeping the love of the Natives, and the preventing their being obliged to the Aid and Aſſiſtance of other *Europeans*, and thereby coming under a dependance upon them, may crave and beſpeak a Relief and Supply of.

Moreover, As nothing but an *Eſtabliſhed Company acting upon a Joynt-Stock*, can either at firſt raiſe, or for any long time maintain Forts and Caſtles; ſo were it not for thoſe upon the *Coaſt* of *Africa*, where the Company hath both ſupplies of Men, to furniſh their Ships with Navigators, in caſe of Mortality among the Sailors, and Stores of Timber to repair them upon decay, as well as other neceſſaries to relieve them under loſſes, it would many times be impoſſible to perform their Voyages, ſo that ſeveral Ships muſt be left to periſh upon the Coaſt either through want of Men to Sail them, of Materials to render them Navigable, or of Supplies to relieve the Mariners.

Finally nothing doth more demonſtrate that the *African Trade*, ought to be managed in the way of a *Joynt Stock*, than that both the *Open* and the *Regulated Way*, have upon Tryal and Experience been found diſhonourable to the Nation, and deſtructive of that Commerce. For whereas that Trade, though Incorporated by King *James* the firſt lay open to all that would engage in it, during the whole time of the laſt Civil War, yet inſtead of its being rendred thereby either Honourable and Advantagious to the Kingdom, or Safe and Enriching to the Managers, the Traders grew poor, and moſt of the Traffick was loſt from the Nation, and the little that remained, lay at the diſcretion of thoſe who Rival us in Commerce. And whereas the miſerable Eſtate, to which it was reduced, by every Mans Trading *ad libitum* gave an occaſion *Anno* 1662 to the Revival of the *Africvn* Trade, under the care of an *Incorporated Company*, and upon the *Fond* of a *Joynt Stock*; ſo that Company through the loſſes which they ſuſtained by the violence of the *Dutch An.* 1664, became neceſſitated to throw it into a more unconfined method, and to give liberty to any ſhips to Trade into thoſe parts under the *Regulation* of *Three Pounds per Tun*. But alas even this Method, after a Tryal of ſix years, was ſo far from being found ſubſervient to the profit of the Kingdom and the enlargement of the *African Trade*, that the King upon a belief that it would be loſt to the Nation, if ſuffered to continue on that Foot, did with matureſt advice both of Stateſmen and Merchants give an *Eſtabliſhment* to the preſent *African* Company.

Of which after the fulleſt enquiry I can make into its Conduct, I may preſume to ſay, That never any Society hath more fully anſwer'd the ends of its Inſtitution, than that hath done. For as it hath rendred the *African* Trade ſafe to the Kingdom in defiance of all our Competitors, ſo in token of their having preferred the profit of the Nation to their own gain, they have uſed to carry out greater quantities of *Engliſh* Manufactures than the *Conſumption* of thoſe parts doth *require*, or their *produce requite*. Nor have they ſince they were Incorporated, exceeded *Seven per Cent.* for One Year with another in all their *Dividends*, but whatſoever they have gained beyond that, by their Induſtrious and prudent management of the Stock, it hath been all applyed either to the enlarging, or to the ſecuring of the Trade.

And Sir ſuffer me to tell you, That as the loſs of 7 *per Cent.* in caſe of the ſuppreſſion of the Company, can be no great prejudice to perſons, who for the moſt part have not above 4 or 5 Hundred Pounds in the Stock, and who beſides their having conſiderable Eſtates in Land, do many of them drive a Trade to other places; ſo were it not out of reſpect to the proſperity of the Kingdom, more than out of regard to their private gain, they would inſtead of oppoſing, purſue the laying open the *Guiney* Trade. Seeing there can be nothing more apparent, than that through the knowledge they

have of the Country, and by reaſon of the Intereſt, which their Factors and Servants have acquired them among the Natives, they are in a condition upon ſuch a Change and Event, to ſupplant and ruine all thoſe who ſhall preſume to drive the *African* Trade in competition with them.

And now Sir, to come to what ſome men ſtile Objections againſt the *African Company*, I do think it may be no rudeneſs to ſtile them groundleſs and impertinent aſſertions. For whereas,

I. They do charge the Company, *with hindring the vent of the Woollen Manufacture, by Trading inconſiderably themſelves, nor ſuffering others, a tenth part of the product of* England *is not Exported for* Guiney, *as might be, if the Trade were open, or managed by a Regulated Company.* I do hereunto anſwer ſeveral things.

1. This Objection reflects on the Wiſdom of the Company, as much as upon their Honeſty; and it makes them falſe to their own Intereſt, as well as unkind and unjuſt to the Nation.

2. 'Tis a groſs miſtake, that a Trades being *Open*, or its being Incorporated, giveth the meaſure of what may be exported of our Manufacture. Seeing that depends upon what the Natives there can take off, and give us returns for, and not upon what the Nation here can make, or the Merchant carry thither. Nor is it the ſelling much in one year, but the conſtant vent that either the Nation or the Traders ſhall grow opulent by. And this can be much better effected by an *Incorporated Company*, than by particular perſons trading at random.

3. The Company is ſo far from being chargeable for ſending leſs thither than can be vented, that they had, by their laſt advices, in their Caſtles and Forts Goods unſold, to the value of 80000 pounds.

4. Whereas the Trade when managed from hence by every Man at pleaſure, became both a reproach to the Nation, and was by our Rivals wreſted from it, through our having abuſed the Natives with falſe and decayed Ware, who though never ſo ſimple, yet being cheated once, they would not be ſo twice; the Company hath not only recovered the credit of the Nation, and retrieved the Trade, by taking care to have all the Commodities good in their kinds, which they export thither, but they have much enlarged it, by furniſhing the *Negroes* with ſuch Ware as their mean and indigent condition will allow them to take off, and have enriched and promoted the Trade of the Kingdom, by the Fabrick of ſeveral new Manufactures not made before in *England*.

And whereas it is Objected,

II. *That the Company advanceth the Trade of other Nations, ſeeing by forbearing to ſupply the Coaſt with Goods, other Nations fill it and beat us out of Trade with their Manufactures, when our own would at the ſame time ſell better among the Natives, if we would ſupply the Market.*

Now tho' moſt of what is here ſuggeſted, be only a Repetition of what was lately alledged, and is already anſwered, and ſerveth rather to declare the pregnancy of their Malice, than either the Fertility of their Wit, or their integrity; yet for the ſilencing of their Clamour, as well as the gratifying their Importunity, I do offer theſe ſeveral things in way of Anſwer.

I. That were it not for the *Forts* and *Caſtles* which only an *Incorporated Company*, Trading upon a *Joynt Stock*, can maintain; Foreigners inſtead of leaving us any ſhare in that Trade, they would Engroſs the whole. Nor is it to be ſuppoſed, that private perſons can upon their narrow *Fonds*, contend againſt the *Power* and *Craft* of thoſe other *European* Nations, who manage their Traffick thither by a *Joynt Stock*.

II. As it is by means of *Forts* and *Caſtles*, that other Nations have acquired and ſecured a Trade upon the *African* Coaſt, ſo there is no hindring or abridging them in the venting of their own *Manufactures*, unleſs we can beat them out of thoſe *Strengths* and *Fortreſſes*. Which as it may be unjuſt for any to attempt; ſo I'm ſure that the laying the *African Trade open*, hath not the leaſt tendency to accompliſh it. But the throwing it either into *that*, or into a *Regulated* Method, were, inſtead of gaining upon our *Competitors*, or a weakning of them in their Traffick to become a prey unto them, and to loſe our own, or at beſt to hold it precariouſly upon the Terms, and in the Degrees that they ſhall think fit to allow.

III. 'Tis a renouncing of all Truth and Modeſty, and an attempting to impoſe upon the Kingdom by Impudence and Falſehood, to ſay that other Nations beat us out of our Trade with their *Manufactures*; ſeeing there is no Nation whatſoever, that vendeth thoſe quantities of *Woollen* Goods there, as the *Engliſh African Company* doth. And if Men would ſo far hearken to Reaſon, as to purſue a regular courſe for narrowing and abridging our Foreign *Competitors*, in what they are now in a condition to ſell to the Natives of *Africa*, it muſt be by preventing the Exportation of our *Wool*, and thereby denying them the means of *fabriquing* Cloaths in their own Territories at home, and not by reſtraining them from tranſporting them to *Africa* when they are made, or from ſelling them when they are there.

IV. The Authors of this Objection muſt be perſons of a ſtrange Forehead, and muſt take thoſe to whom they Addreſs to be very credulous and eaſie of belief, ſeeing the chief Complainant Mr. *Gardner* well knows, that the laſt year the Ship *Swan* found the *African* Coaſt ſo well ſupplied by the *Company* with *Engliſh Manufacture*, that of a ſmall Cargo in which the Owners had a ſhare, of twenty Sayes conſigned to the Maſter *Giles Daniel*, to be ſold at any place on the Coaſt, between *Cape Mount* and *Taccarada*, yet the ſaid Maſter in 49 days ſtay on that Coaſt, could ſell but two pieces of Sayes, ſo was forced to leave the other 18 at the *Companies Caſtle*, together with ſeveral other Goods, for want of vent.

137

And whereas it is objected, 3dly. *That the Company ſet what Price they pleaſe upon the Manufacture of* England, *ſo lower the Price of Wool, ruine the Workers and Dealers in the Woollen Manufacture, becauſe there is but one Buyer.*

To this, how frivolous ſoever it be in its ſelf, and how much deſpiſed by Men of Senſe and Thought, I ſhall to gratifie the querulous humour of thoſe Gentlemen, return theſe few things by way of Reply.

I. 'Tis impoſſible that the *Company* ſhould be able to fix and determine the price of the *Woollen Manufacture*, ſeeing the whole Trade to *Africa* cannot take off the hnndred part of what is Fabriqu'd in *England*. Nor therefore,

2dly. Can it be ſubject to one Buyer, ſeeing there are many hundreds that Trade to other places, who buy of the Clothiers as well as they.

3*dly*. All *Woollen Manufactures*, whither proper for *Guiney* and bought up by the *Company*, or more agreeable to the vent in other places, and purchaſed by the reſpective Dealers thither, are much fallen from what they formerly went at, and that not upon the account of the Trades being managed by a ſingle Buyer, but by reaſon of the plenty and cheapneſs of *Wool* at home, and of the great *Manufacture* of *Woollen Cloaths* made by our Competiters in Trade abroad.

4*thly*. Moſt of the Goods ſent to *Africa*, being of a different Quality from that which is vended elſewhre; it is not to be imagined that the Labourers in the *Woollen Manufacture*, would meerly for the gratifying of the *Company*, concern and employ themſelves about what they need, if they did not find their profit and advantage in it. Nor,

5*thly*. Did I ever hear that thoſe clamorous Gentlemen, have at any time for the encouraging the *Woollen Manufacture* of *England*, been willing to afford a higher price than others have bought for. And were I to enquire into their conduct in relation to the Commodities they deal in, I do not doubt but that they would be found to act with leſs Honour and Generoſity, as well as with leſs Mercy and Juſtice, than thoſe do whom they accuſe and ſlander.

And whereas it is objected,

4. *That the Company ruineth Their Majeſties Plantations, partly by not ſupplying them with a neceſſary quantity of* Negroes, *partly by taking exceſſive Rates for thoſe they ſell, and partly by furniſhing the Planters with* Negroes *that are unfit.*

I do thereunto anſwer many things.

I. That by all which doth yet appear in the ſeveral *Papers* publiſhed by the Complainants, they only ſeek a liberty for themſelves to Trade, but have propoſed no advantages, either to this Nation, or the *American Plantations*, but what they do already enjoy by the *Affrican* Company.

2*dly*. The *Company* hath and doth yearly Import more *Negroes* into the *Plantations*, than the *Planters* have at reaſonable Rates, been either willing, or able to pay for. And it were more becoming thoſe angry and calumniating Gentlemen, to propoſe ways whereby the *Planters* may pay the *Company* the Debts they have contracted, being indebted to the *Company* above 170000 *l*. Sterling, than to clamour becauſe they do not truſt them, beyond the hope and proſpect of any ſatisfaction.

3*dly*. It is not likely that private Traders, either would or could Import more *Negroes* than the *Company* doth. Nor is that the thing which is aimed at, but the deſign is, that the Rich *Planters* having liberty to fetch *Negroes*, may furniſh themſelves with the beſt, and then to oblige thoſe *Planters* that are poor and needy, to take off the worſt upon ſuch terms, as they ſhall think fit to ſell them.

4*thly*. As it is demonſtrable, that the *Company* are both abler, and will find their Intereſt in it, to bring more *Negroes* than private *Traders* can do; ſo it is no leſs evident, that the indigent and neceſſitous *Planters* will be more mercifully, as well as equally dealt with by the *Companies Factors*, whoſe buſineſs it is to carry themſelves indifferently to all, than they can expect or hope for from their fellow *Planters*, whoſe advantage it is to ſupplant, if not ruine to them.

5*thly*. The great increaſe in the *Produce* of the *Plantations*, ſince the *Company* had the management of the *Negro Trade*, is both a ſufficient confutation of their wanting hands, and of the *Companies* neglecting to ſupply them. For as it is by *Negroes*, that their ground is cultivated, and the whole product of it Manufactured; ſo it is eaſie to conclude, that they have not been ſcanted in hands, by the vaſt encreaſe of the *Produce* of their grounds beyond what it was.

6*thly*. Nor is it poſſible for the *Company* to enhance the price of *Negroes*, ſeeing that as they cannot in expectation of a Market, without loſs as well as expence, keep them for any long time after their arrival at the *Plantations*, and by conſequence cannot preſcribe a Rule to the Buyers; ſo the *Company* not being the alone ſellers, they muſt comply with the Rates that others are willing

to diſpoſe them for. For as every Maſter of a Ship is furniſhed with *Negroes* to ſell, through the *Companies* allowing him one of five towards the defraying the Freight of the reſt, ſo it is obſerved that they do uſually ſell theirs at a dearer price, tho' for ready paym.nt, than the *Company* have for their own, albeit, obliged to allow credit in a very large meaſure.

7*thly*. As the *Company* would not have departed from that Order of the Council the 12*th*. of *Nov*. 1680. by which they were reſtrain'd to certain prices at *Jamaica* for their *Negroes*, if the *Planters* would have complied with the payments that they were to make, and have taken them by Lott, and not by Head; ſo that Order was upon a full hearing at the Council the 12*th*. of *April* 1684. Reverſed and Repealed by reaſon of the *Planters* ill payment. And yet it can be proved that notwithſtanding the Cancelling that Order, the *Company* was ſo careful of the *Plantations*, that from the year 1680. to 1688. they made Proviſion to ſupply *Jamaica* by ſending Cargoes to purchaſe 25000 *Negroes*, whereby the Debt on that *Iſland* to the *Company*, encreaſed 40000 *l*. more than it was before the making that Order.

Finally, whereas it is objected, *That the Company doth greatly oppreſs Their Majeſties Subjects, by their exacting* 30 *and* 40 per Cent *for thoſe Ships, which they afford Licenſe unto, to Trade to* Guiney.

To this I have likewiſe divers things to Reply.

1. That it is unjuſt to complain of that, as an injury, which they deſired as a favour. And the Company may have juſt reaſon to take it amiſs, that what they yielded in order to prevent the clamour of a *Monopoly*, and to beget a general ſatisfaction, ſhould give occaſion for a new accuſation, and encreaſe the cry.

2 As the Company upon their firſt ſettlement, propoſed by a Declaration which they Emitted for the Encouragement of the *Plantations*, that they would deliver *Negroes* at *Barbadoes* for 15 pound a head; at the *Leward Iſlands* for 16 pound; and at *Jamaica* for 17 pound; ſo it is obſervable that the *Planters* after ſeveral *Contracts* made for *Negroes* upon thoſe Terms, where the firſt that departed from being concluded by thoſe Offers, and that renounced the benefit of them; for they choſe rather to give from 30 to 40 *per Cent*. to have ſuitable *Cargoes*, and to take the benefit of the *African Trade*, than ſubmit to be ſupplyed by the *African Company* at the aforementioned Rates.

3. The utmoſt that the Company have taken, doth not exceed what may be juſtly expected towards the ſupport of their Charge, the intereſt of their Money, and the liberty of fetching *Angola Negroes*. For as the Companies Annual Charge is 15 *per Cent*. on the whole Trade; ſo being out of their Money about two years, it may well be expected they have 10 or 12 *per Cent*. *per Annum* more where they give credit for Goods in the way of Trade, and whereby in all probability the Buyers may pay the Company with their own Money.

4. The Company in order to ſilence all Complaints, and to create a ſatisfaction in all Their Majeſties Subjects, have this year declared, That whoſoever will buy their own Cargoes, and oblige themſelves to Trade only beyond the *Cape Formoſa*, ſuch ſhall thereupon have Licences granted them at the rate of 15 pound *perCent*. And ſeeing the *Company* through their being at the Charge of 15000 *l*. *per Annum*, for preſerving the *African Traffick*, do not trade at a cheaper rate themſelves, it cannot be accounted a burthen impoſed upon their fellow Subjects to take of them the ſame terms.

So that now Sir upon the whole, I do not only preſume the having given you ſatisfaction in this matter, but I have that confidence in the Wiſdom and Juſtice of the Parliament, as to promiſe my ſelf that ſo Judicious and Auguſt an Aſſembly, will be ſo far from laying the *African Trade Open*, which were in effect to deſtroy it, that they will by a Law confirm that Right unto the Company, which they have been ſo long in the poſſeſſion of by a *Charter*. And as I can be under no apprehenſion, that ſo wiſe a *Body* as the Parliament of *England*, will deprive a *Society* of their *Property*, which their *Caſtles* and *Forts* unqueſtionably are, without allowing them a juſt and valuable conſideration; ſo I dare affirm, That all which is hitherto propoſed for their ſatisfaction, is not only frivolous and uncertain, but wholly impracticable Nor doth it ſeem reaſonable, that after they have by vaſt Expence, excellent Conduct, and indefatigable Induſtry recovered, enlarged and ſecured a Trade, and made it of as National Advantge, as it is well capable of being, that others ſhould ſtep in both to rob them of the profit, and to worm them out of it. And as ſuch a *procedure* muſt infallibly diſcourage all Men from undertaking any Noble and Generous Deſign hereafter: So it is eaſie to foreſee how fatal and miſchievous this may prove to our Poſterity, if it doth not to the preſent Generation.

Nay Sir, ſuffer me to tell you, That the ſetling the *African Trade* under a *Regulated Company*, which is the great Method, that crafty and confident Men do propoſe, and which weak Perſons are inclined to hearken unto; will be ſo far from rendring it more enlarged and National, that it will reduce it into fewer hands than it now is in, and will exclude many from all benefit by it, who under the preſent Eſtabliſhment, have both a ſhare in it, and do partake of the gain and profit ariſing from it. For while it is ſupported and carryed on by a *Joynt Stock*, Perſons of all Qualities, Sexes,

and

138

and Ages, are capable of being Adventurers in it, and of having equal Advantage by it with the very *Managers* themſelves; whereas upon the exchanging this way of management into the Method of a *Regulated* Company, not only all *Females*, *Children* and *Perſons of great Figure and lofty Title*, muſt be ſhut out, but it muſt immediately lapſe into a few hands, and thoſe ſuch who are both the moſt wealthy and opulent, and whoſe alone *Province* is Traffick and Commerce.

Yea whereas ſome intregneing Gentlemen ſtudy to flatter and delude ſeveral Perſons of Intereſt, to deſtroy the preſent *Incorporated African Company*, and to eſtabliſh a *Regulated* one in its room, and that upon a ſuggeſtion that the Members of the *latter*, will both ſupply the *Plantations* with more *Negroes*, and at *cheaper Rates*, than thoſe of the *former* hath done, I will therefore farther add, that nothing is more demonſtrable, than that diſappointment in both theſe muſt neceſſarily attend ſuch a change. For as Merchants diſintereſted in the *Plantations*, will never engage themſelves in the *Negroe* Trade, both becauſe of the vaſt credit they will be forced to give, and by reaſon of the uncertainty in payment that they muſt at laſt ſubmit unto; ſo we may be ſure, that how careful ſoever the rich Planters will be to provide for, and to furniſh themſelves with a multitude of luſty hands; yet they will not judge it for their Intereſt to ſupply their poor Neighbours, either with ſuch numbers as their grounds do require, or with thoſe of that Ability that their work doth beſpeak, or laſtly at ſuch eaſie rates as they may grow rich by their labour. But the poor Planter for want of ready payment muſt engage his Plantation to his Neighbour, whoſe Intereſt it is not to ſhew Mercy, but upon failure of payment by bad Crops or the like, to ſuppreſs others that his own Commodity may better turn to account.

But to conclude, If there be any juſt doubts ariſing about the Powers granted by *Charter* to the preſent *African* Company; or if there be any inconveniencies in their managing of themſelves purſuant to that Right, which they judge veſted in them: I do preſume that they will with the utmoſt alacrity and chearfulneſs, ſubmit themſelves in all to the Authority of Parliament, and will expect from the Wiſdom of the Great Senate, the Redreſs of all that may be either inconvenient to themſelves, or injurious to others. And as they propoſe nothing by craving a *Law* for *confirmation* of their *Charter*, but the Honour of the Government, the Proſperity of the *American* Plantations, and the promoting and encreaſing the Wealth of the Kingdom; ſo I do not queſtion, but that they are able to repreſent ſuch Wayes, Means, and Methods unto the Parliament, as that all thoſe ends may be fully anſwered. I am

SIR,

London, Novemb. 15. 1690.

Your moſt Obedient Servant.

The Trade of Africa
only managable by a
Joynt Comp.ª